Changes to Transitional Ministry Handbook 2020-2021

- Requirement that search committees and ministers fill out search covenants via Wufoo form deleted from handbook. There is now a checkbox on each congregational and ministerial record for search participants to check to signify that they have read the covenant language in the Transitional Ministry Handbook.

- P. 4, addition under Leaving Well: “Finger pointing, “You should” statements, and entrenched negative feelings and rigidity are impediments to both minister and congregation. Self-reflection and learning are helpful, and often both the minister and the congregation need guidance outside of their system to move toward healing...Congregations with conflicted endings may develop a negative reputation. Ministers go through a review process before moving forward to future congregational ministries.”

- P. 4, addition under Leaving Well, “Our congregations struggle with marginalized groups, both within our congregations as a whole and with ministers who occupy such identities. Ministers who feel their identities have negatively impacted their ministry are encouraged to reach out to any member of the Transitions team.”

- P. 5, addition under Knowing When to End a Ministry: “Is my marginalized identity detracting from my ability to minister?”

- P. 7, addition: “Expected Behavior from Congregational Staff when a Minister Departs: Often forgotten, a ministerial departure has huge impact on staff. The work of the staff is two-fold here, First they too must say good-bye to the outgoing minister. They must also serve the congregation, by being present, supporting leaders and the minister and continuing their professional responsibilities and behavior. If the ending of the ministry is conflicted, the staff should avoid triangulation and the taking of sides in the conflict. If staff need support, they should find it outside of the congregation, through their professional organizations, therapists, and other sources of support.”

- P. 9, addition under Ministers who retire: “To participate in the Service of the Living Tradition, you must complete and submit this form:
  https://uua.wufoo.com/forms/intent-to-retire-from-full-time-service/

  For more information about retirement, visit:
  https://www.uua.org/careers/ministers/transitions/retiring

  A good article to read:

- P. 12, revised exit interview questions

- P. 14, revised congregational transition interview questions
• P. 15, addition under Exit Interview (Regional Staff Use): “How did identity bias (gender, sexuality, ableism) impact the minister and ministry?”

• P. 23, amendment under Overview of Interim Search Process: All interim ministries begin on August 1 instead of July 1 or August 1.

• P. 24, addition under Covenant for Congregations Seeking Interim Ministry: “We acknowledge that differences in pay based upon gender, race, ethnicity, ableism, and other marginalized identities are well documented, and understand that ministers are encouraged to communicate with the Transitions Office regarding the salary offered.”

• P. 27, addition under How Interim Search Works: check references prior to conducting initial video interviews. Clarification of process for congregations and ministers to submit ranked lists of candidates to the Transitions Office.

• P. 27, addition under Compensation and Background Checks: link to geoindex listings for 2021-2022.

• P. 30: addition under Getting Ready for the Interim Ministry/Common Read: “The MidAmerica Region has hosted some videos on ministerial transitions. They are on the right-hand side of the web page at this link: https://www.uua.org/midamerica/resources/transitions.

• P. 30, addition: “For Ministers Considering Interim Ministry: Interim Ministry is not settled ministry. Interim ministry has evolved from a place where a congregation got an interim minister as a placeholder while they searched for their next settled minister. Interim ministry should not be perceived as something an interim minister does to a congregation.

Interim ministry is a collaboration between congregational leaders, staff, and the interim minister to help the congregation move forward toward a new future. Interim ministers must be prepared to work with congregations in various stages of grief, readiness, and receptivity to this ministry to be successful at it.

Ministers considering interim ministry are encouraged to read In the Interim and to reach to colleagues currently engaged in interim ministry for even more information and discernment. Interim training is not required to begin the process of entering into interim ministry. It will be expected once someone enters into an interim ministry.”

• P. 31, addition under The Process for Ministers Wanting to Apply to Do Interim Ministry: “Special note: The Transitions Office encourages every minister to have website. This is to be a presence for Unitarian Universalism in the wider world. What congregational search committees want more than anything else is to see and experience sermons/worship.”

• P. 33, addition under Becoming an Accredited Interim Minister: Requirements for Admission: “Demonstrate a proven willingness to seek, illuminate, and create
opportunities for the full integration of people with historically and currently marginalized identities into all aspects of congregational life, and to dismantle white supremacist culture.”

- P. 44, addition under Developmental Ministry Overview: “If there is significant cultural change work to be done in the congregation, developmental ministry may be a good path forward.”

- P. 48, addition under Compensation, Benefits, and Relocation for Developmental Ministers: Professional Expenses: “Separate from professional expenses, we strongly encourage every developmental minister to have additional money set aside for transitional ministry training.”

- P. 49, addition under Contract Ministry Overview: “Contract ministry searches are for second ministry positions (assistant ministers), part-time ministers, and for smaller congregations seeking a solo minister. A congregational call is still possible with a solo contract minister, even one who is serving part-time (see the contract-to-call process in this handbook).”

- P. 49, clarification under Contract Ministry Overview: searches for all contract ministry positions, regardless of percent time of the position, are expected to be executed through the MinistrySearch system rather than simply being posted on the jobs board. Additional details and reminders about steps and timing of contract ministry searches have been added.

- P. 53, sample contract ministry evaluation added.

- P. 56, addition, “Contract ministers are encouraged to take the Transitional Ministry training.”

- P. 56 Information about Targeted Ministry Program, including links to applications for congregations and ministers as well as an evaluation form, added.

- In Relocation sections of Interim, Contract, and Developmental Ministry Overviews, information added about international relocations: “Any Search Committee from a congregation located in the United States that considers hiring or calling a minister who is not a U.S. citizen should make sure their congregation has its own 501c3 status. Please contact the Transitions Office for more information.

For ministers who are U.S. citizens and are considering moving to and serving in a Canadian congregation, a document with considerations for religious professionals moving to Canada exists. Please ask the Transitions Office for more information.”